

Hinges & Tongs

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August 2019 – October 2019



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ROPEX 2019



Half of the ROPEX show floor.

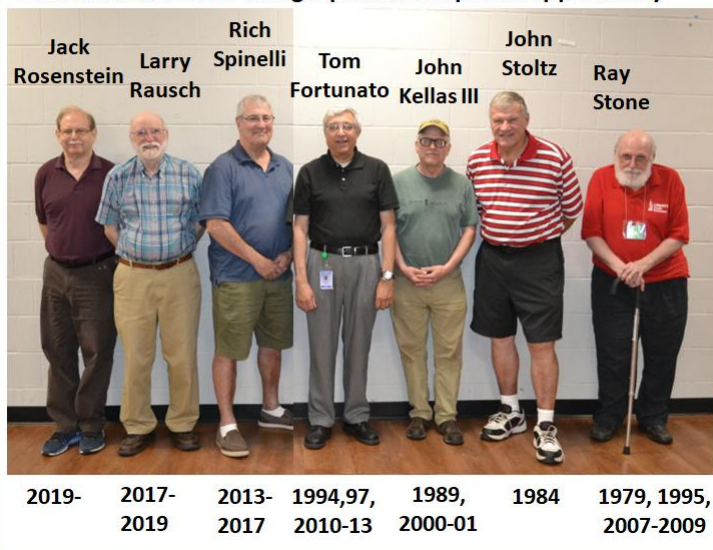


Our resident "engineer", Carl Miller explains the Transcontinental Railroad theme to some young stamp collectors



Two Design-A-Stamp winners point to their winning designs. RPA Youth Leader Mary Iman looks on.

RPA welcomed in a new President in June as Jack Rosenstein started his two year term. There were six other Past Presidents at the meeting: quite a rare photo opportunity.



Of course our final meeting before the summer break was also "Strawberry Night". As is tradition, John Kellas provided the largest ripest berries his family farm could offer and everyone set aside their diets for the evening for a strawberries and whipped cream dessert.



John Kellas dishes up the berries while Dave Roehrig adds the caloric whipped cream.

Greeting to RPA Members:

We hope your summer was a good one and that you are ready to join us again in September as we return to our twice monthly meeting schedule.

Upcoming RPA Meetings

Thurs. Sept. 12th - "What I did this summer"

Thurs. Sept. 26th - TBA

Thurs. Oct. 10th - TBA

Thurs. Oct. 24th - Baseball on Worldwide Covers
by *Luis Greiff*

Thurs. Nov. 14th The 1898 Canadian Map Stamp:
Printing and Varieties by *Robert Lighthouse*

Thurs. Dec. 12th - TBA

If you have a program that you can present, we will seeking to fill the fall spots at the first meeting in September. Meetings begin at 7 PM at the JCC in Brighton. The first half hour is for silent auction, show/trade among members, and general member interaction. The evening program begins at 7:30 PM.

Regional Stamp Shows/Bourses

Sept 7-8 **Mississauga, ON** National Postage Stamp and Coin Show. Hilton Mississauga, 6750 Mississauga Rd. Hours: 10-5, 10-4. 40 dealers. \$3 admission Saturday, free Sunday.

Email: jtrauzzi@yahoo.ca

Website: <http://stampandcoinshow.com/>

Sep 8 **Syracuse** Syracuse 2nd Sunday Stamp Show, Maplewood Inn, Thruway Exit 36. Hours: 10-4:30. Bourse. Contact: Ed Bailey, 315-452-0593

October 6 **Rochester/Brockport** Stamp & Coin Show and Sale, Western Monroe Philatelic Society: Brockport Fireman's Exempt, 248 West Avenue, Brockport. Hours 10-4. 5 dealer bourse. Contact: Dave Bombard, 585-352-6955. Email: dbombard1@rochester.rr.com

Oct 18-19 **Big Flats** STEPEX Stamp Show. Sponsored by the Elmira Stamp Club. American Legion Post, 45 South Olcott Rd, I-86 at exit 49. Hours: 10-6, 10-5. Dealers, exhibits, USPS, show cancel and cacheted envelopes, junior activities. Contact Al Parsons, 607-732-0181. Email: alatholleyrd@aol.com

Visit our [online calendar](#) for even more area show news

**Lou
Atvell**

November 5, 1945

- July 5, 2019



It is with great sadness that we report the loss of an active club member this summer. Lou Atvell was an ever present part of our meetings, arriving early, occupying the seat next to the silent auction table and greeting everyone who ventured through the door with a smile. He fell ill just prior to ROPEX and we missed him there as well.

Lou loved his stamps and life in general. He was a proud Army veteran and a graphic artist as the proprietor of Lou Atvell Signs. He designed the wonderful sign we post outside our meeting hall on Thursdays at the JCC. It will be sad in September when Lou is not there greeting all of us.

Join us for the ROPEX 2020 Stamp Show ----- Fri. - Sat. May 15 - 16 Hours 10-6, 10-3 ----- Canandaigua Civic Center 250 North Bloomfield Rd	ROPEX 2020 Mayflower 1620 Forever USA
ROPEX 2020 Women's Suffrage Passage of the Susan B. Anthony 19th Amendment 1920 Forever USA	Exhibitors: Limit of 125 competitive frames. Apply early! 1 Frame @ \$25 2-7 @ \$15/Frame 8-10 @ \$100 ----- Dealers: Tables starting at \$225 ----- See info and apply online at rpastamps.org 585-752-6178 stampmfg@gmail.com

Arenophilia by Fred Haynes



Your editor has a confession to make. I have become an arenophile. Fortunately, it is not illegal (unless trespassing while doing it or [if you are in Sardinia](#)), and it should not be harmful to my health. I would say it is generally not contagious, but I did catch it this past spring when Jim Rienhardt introduced me to the hobby at a local rock club meeting. I did not realize I was hooked until this summer. While collecting minerals on trips in Maine and in Michigan, I kept my eyes open for sands to collect and proceeded to fill quart freezer bags at a few dozen locations along lakes, rivers, and even from glacial deposits. You see an "arenophile" is a lover of sand. The word is derived from the Latin "arena" (sand) and the Greek "phil" (love).

Turns out there are several Facebook Groups comprised of arenophiles who trade sands through the mail using the small USPS boxes to send 30 ml packets of sand to fellow arenophiles around the world. I've yet to do this, and it is costly outside the US, but I have begun processing (describing, drying and packaging packets from the 40 samples I have acquired). When winter comes I suspect I will find some folks with whom to trade. Since as many as 20 samples fit into the small USPS box, it is easy to accumulate samples rapidly.

But this is a philatelic newsletter, what does this have to do with stamps? Well, I already collect stamps depicting minerals, rocks, and other geology-related thematic topics. Why not look for pictures of sand on stamps? A quick look for beaches on stamps indicates that the topic is broad and possibly suitable for a winter endeavor when the beaches are covered by ice and snow (at least those in the Northern Hemisphere).



How about this for starters? I've yet to collect or trade for sand from Cape Hatteras, but wouldn't it be neat to combine a 20 ml bottle sample of Cape Hatteras sand with this 4 stamp set in some sort of display? (Scott 1448-1451 issued in 1972)

Notice the lighthouse in the background of the Cape Hatteras shoreline scene?. Many lighthouses are found on sandy shorelines.



Perhaps I should visit Thirty Mile Point on Lake Ontario and collect a sand sample there to accompany the 1995 stamp (Scott #2973) that was part of the Great Lake Lighthouse series. And I'd be willing to bet those other Great Lake lighthouses have sand also! I wonder if it would be possible to combine sand samples with stamps into a philatelic exhibit? I'm only wondering; I do not plan to attempt it!

Of course there are historic beaches that have been depicted on postage stamps. During WW2 beaches in both the Pacific and Atlantic were venues for intense military action. Can I get sand from these?



Kiribati (originally the Gilbert Islands) issued stamps in 2005 marking the 60th anniversary of the battles for Tarawa Beach. A decade later (in June 2014) Jersey issued 6 stamps 70 years after the Invasion of Normandy; all are paintings by David Pentland.

But as geologist, I suspect my interest will remain with those stamps with geologic significance. There remain plenty to choose from.



On the left aeolian dunes from Sigatoka on a 1991 stamp from Fiji and on the right Sri Lanka featured Kawtharimunai Beach in Pooneryn in 2006. I would probably have to trade for dune sand samples from these more exotic locations.

If I graduate from simply being a sand collector to actually scientifically studying the sands I obtain, then I will no longer only be an arenophile. I will also be a psammologist. I kid you not. Look it up!

An Interesting Autographed Cover

By Rich Spinelli



The autograph in blue on the 1949 Grand Army of the Republic stamp is that of James Hard, who was at the time of this signing was 108 years old and the oldest living combat veteran from the Civil War. But that is only a small part of the story.

James Albert Hard was born in Victor, New York on July 15, 1841. He was the son of Alanson Pratt and Martha Frost Hard, the third of 13 children. In 1868, Mr. Hard married his first wife who died in 1880. They had one daughter who died in 1948 at the age of 75. In 1884 he married his second wife who died in 1929. James Albert Hard had 3 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and 7 great-great grandchildren.

He was 19 years old at the time of President Lincoln's first call for volunteers and he enlisted at Dryden, NY on April 18, 1861. He served in the regular Army for 2 years serving in Co. E, 32nd NY Volunteers. As a private, he fought in the Battles of Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and Antietam.

He met President Lincoln twice. Their first meeting was at a White House reception at the outbreak of the war just after his enlistment - before he had been issued a uniform. As he approached Lincoln the President shook his and said, "Well, son, you look like you would make a good soldier, why don't you join up?" His second meeting with Lincoln was at Bailey's Cross Roads when Lincoln was inspecting troops, at which time he again shook hands with the President. He also once shook hands with General Ulysses S. Grant.

As a young man, Hard worked on farms. He had very little schooling. After the war, he returned to

civilian life as a government railroad worker. Thereafter, he engaged in carpenter work for a time. Finally he became a notary and had a flourishing pension business continuing in the same office for 38 years. Hard settled in Rochester in 1882, which remained his home for over 70 years.

James A. Hard attended the last encampment of the NY Department, Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) in 1948 and of the national organization in 1949. He was deaf and blind when he signed the GAR stamped envelope in February of 1950. He was also 108 years old.

When he died in Rochester on March 12, 1953 at the claimed age of 111 years and 240 days, he was the last combat Civil War veteran to pass away. Some historians do place his birth two years later, in 1843.

The City of Rochester gave James Hard a State funeral. Thousands lined the streets of Rochester to say good-bye. The City Hall bell tolled 13 times. It was the first time since V-J Day in 1945 that the bell had sounded. He was laid to rest in Rochester's Mt. Hope Cemetery next to his second wife, Anna, who died in 1929.

I noticed this cover early in its seven-day listing on E-bay. Opening bid was moderately set, but no bids had been made. Because I remember studying and reading about Pvt. Hard prior to his death, I thought the world knew about him and that Civil War bidding would ultimately become extremely active and the sale would close high.

I anxiously followed the bidding for the duration of the listing. No bids, no bids no bids. I expected someone would make a bid during the last few seconds as is wont. On the last day, five seconds before closing, I submitted a \$100 dollar bid. I held my breath and waited five seconds. Nothing! No other bids. I won the cover at its initial listing!

Currently, I have the cover listed on Ebay at the same price as a cover with the last CSA soldier's signature. Not much action on either, so my cover will soon rest in my Civil War Album.



My Transcontinental Railroad Cover by Whitney McMahon



“Be Sure You Are Right and Then Go Ahead”

--Davy Crockett

As a stamp collector my main interest is train stamps. I was very much looking forward to the release of the three stamps commemorating the 150th anniversary of the transcontinental railroad on May 10th. I decided to ask my son to design a cachet for me to print and produce a few unofficial first day covers.

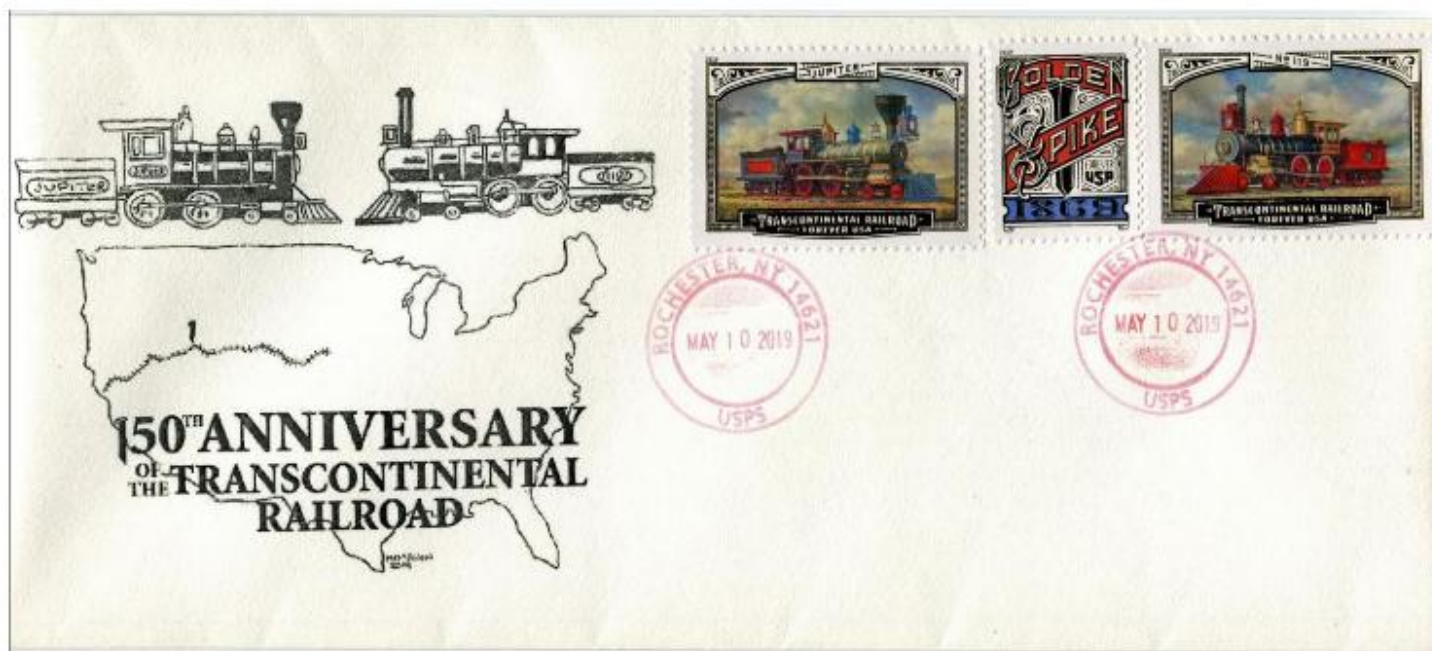
I presented my covers for cancelling at the nearest branch post office. I was told that I could cancel them myself, but I would then have to give them back to the clerk to send through the mail stream. I explained what they were: unaddressed first day covers to be returned to me, not something for me to use to commit fraud (their word). I told them they were called handbacks and it was a regular practice done for stamp collectors. At this point all four clerks said “No, you can’t do that; it’s not allowed.” I asked them to check it out in the Domestic Mail Manual

(DMM) and they would see that it is indeed a standard practice.

The clerk talked to her supervisor, who then called the main office in Henrietta, and the final word was “No, can’t do it.”

I went home, spent a few minutes on the internet, and found in the DMM, section 164.232 Handback Service that explained in detail what handbacks were. It gave all the information as to how to handle them. I printed this out, returned to the post office, and showed this information to the clerk. The clerk talked to the supervisor, who made another call to the main office, and I was finally allowed to cancel my covers and take them home.

Sometimes it pays to not only know what you’re talking about, but be able to prove it.



University of Rochester celebrates Queen Victoria 200th Birthday

By Larry Rausch

I received an announcement about a free Grand Opening at the University of Rochester Rush Rhees Library. This talk and display celebrated the 200th birthday of Queen Victoria, born May 24, 1819. With my collecting interest in Queen Victoria postage stamps, it was an opportunity for Susan and I to attend on March 27th. Professor of History, Stewart Weaver, gave a one hour talk on Queen Victoria and her impact on history followed by the opening of a two-room display of Queen Victoria rare books and artifacts presented by the U of R Rare Books Special Collections archivist entitled "Victoria: A Ruling Image". This FREE exhibit is open on the second floor of the library until October 5th, 2019 with free parking in the library lot.

Under Queen Victoria, Great Britain introduced the first postage stamp to the world on May 6, 1840 (Figure 1). This one penny black stamp was in production for six months with a production of 86 million stamps. On January 1, 1841, the stamp color was changed to red, (Figure 2), and continued printing until 1881. The color changed because it was harder to remove black and red cancellation ink from a red stamp. This prevented consumers from reusing stamps by cleaning. Great Britain introduced a series of six stamps in 2019 in celebration of Queen Victoria's birthday. One of the stamps is shown in Figure 3.

Do to the lack of stamps in the display, I invited archivist, Andrea Reithmayr, to our home to show her and provide the history of the 214 different Queen Victoria stamps produced from 1840 to 1900 during her reign.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Iceland to Suspend Issuing Stamps

Normally this is where Hinges and Tongs describes a few new issues, but this quarter there is news of another sort. The country of Iceland has decided to suspend the issuing of new stamps as soon as all those currently that are in preparation are issued. By the end of 2020, or early in 2021, there will be no new Icelandic stamps issued. The Icelandic Review, in an article dated August 22nd, reports that the Icelandic Postal Service has been operating at large deficits for several years and part of a restructuring plan includes eliminating the practice of issuing new stamps.

Sales, both for regular postage usage and to collectors, have steadily declined over the past decade and after the new stamps currently being planned and printed have been issued, the country will rely on its sizable stock of already issued stamps. Iceland Posts CEO, Birgir Jonsson said "We have a stock of stamps that will last for many years, maybe until the last letter is sent". Ouch!

Comic Books are NOT Media Mail

Certified Guaranty Company (CGC), a leading grading service for comic books is reporting that the postal service seems to be cracking down a bit on its enforcement of the rule that comic books are not eligible for Media Mail rates.

In fact one customer reported to CGC that his fully sealed domestic mail containing comic books had been opened, the contents evaluated, and repackaged before being delivered. A "Media Mail Service Inspection Slip" was attached detailing the infraction, but apparently only as a warning for this first offense. The postage due, calculated at a bit over \$2 was not sought, but the message was clearly delivered. This better not happen again!

Comic books, unlike novels or non-fiction books or textbooks, often contain advertisements. For this reason they are treated the same as magazines and do not qualify for the less expensive Media Mail rates.